

MULTISYSTEMIC THERAPY PROGRAM

Multisystemic Therapy (MST) is an intensive short-term treatment program aimed at meeting the mental health needs of families whose adolescents are exhibiting serious antisocial behaviors. In an effort to reduce barriers that often interfere with a family engaging in the therapeutic process, MST services are provided in the home and community. MST therapists are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and typically have multiple face-to-face contacts with the family during each week of treatment. The therapists also maintain regular contact with minor's probation officer and school.

Each MST therapist carries a caseload of between 4 and 6 families which allows them to concentrate their efforts as well be available to the families on an "as needed" basis. MST utilizes a highly structured treatment approach in which families set treatment goals and collaborate with their therapist to design and implement interventions to meet these goals.

The overarching goals of MST are to:

- Decrease the youth's association with negative peers
- Increase the youth's association with pro-social peers
- Improve the caregivers use of discipline
- Enhance family relations and overall functioning
- Improve the youth's school and/or vocational performance
- Engage the youth in pro-social recreational outlets
- Develop a support network of extended family, neighbors, and friends to assist the parents/caregivers in achieving and maintaining MST treatment goals.

MST Services include:

- Individual and family therapy
- Substance abuse counseling
- Case management and referrals
- Advocacy
- Assistance with a child or family member's problems at home, school, or in the community
- Crisis intervention
- Training and education in parenting skills

Who qualifies for MST?

Adolescents meeting each of the following criteria:

- Between 12 and 17 years of age
- Classified as a WIC 602 or 790 status minor
- Presence of negative and externalizing behaviors including:
 - Poor school performance
 - Poor peer relationships
 - Truancy
 - Substance abuse
 - Running away from home
 - Firesetting, disobedience, stealing, aggression and other antisocial behaviors
- At risk for recidivism or placement in a more restrictive living situation.

<p><i>ACTIVE GANG MEMBERS, INDIVIDUALS ON PROBATION FOR SEXUAL OFFENCES, AND INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE SUICIDAL OR HOMICIDAL ARE NOT APPROPRIATE REFERRALS FOR MST</i></p>

How are individuals and families referred to MST?

Referrals are made by the Deputy Probation Officer by contacting **Prospective Authorization Utilization Review Unit (PAUR)**. The DPO must submit a MST referral form.